

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Integrated Regional Water Management Implementation Proposition 50, Chapter 8 IRWM Implementation Step 1

PIN: 6398
APPLICANT NAME: Tahoe Resource Conservation District
PROJECT TITLE: Tahoe Sierra Integrated Regional Water Management Project
FUNDS REQUESTED: \$29,341,641
COST MATCH: \$22,677,900
TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$52,019,541

DESCRIPTION: The Tahoe Sierra Integrated Regional Water Management Proposal is a collaborative effort of ten partner agencies, and it addresses water management needs of a unique and sensitive region. The proposal is a group of projects that implement a regional water management strategy. Projects include erosion control, wetland restoration, fisheries enhancement, water pipeline replacement, non-point source pollution control, water conservation and TMDL Implementation.

Question: Consistency with Minimum IRWM Standards - This evaluation will focus on whether the applicant has demonstrated that the IRWM Plan meets the minimum standards.

Pass

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Adopted IRWM Plan and Proof of Formal Adoption. Weighting factor is 1. 1

There is no proof that the FED is adopted by any of the participating agencies. The applicant states that the Tahoe Sierra region has an FED that consists of 11 existing regional planning documents, collectively referred to as the Tahoe Sierra Plan. Attachment 4 states all 11 plans were adopted prior to Jan 1, 2007 and refers to Attachment 3 for proof of formal adoption. Apparently, each plan was adopted by the originating agency, but none of the participating agencies adopted plans by other participating agencies. Attachment 4 states, "As is appropriate for the Tahoe Sierra Regional Water Management Group (Group), the Tahoe Sierra Plan linking document will not be formally adopted, rather each partner in the Group has submitted a formal letter of participation, which can be found in Attachment 2." The RWB Basin Plan is one of the listed FEDs, but it is not clear how periodic changes to the Basin Plan will impact the FED.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Description of Region. Weighting factor is 1. 3

A map was included with major boundaries and project locations but no land use and water infrastructure. Land use and water infrastructure are discussed in Attachment 3, Section B. Current and future water resources are briefly discussed in Attachment 3. The appropriateness of the planning area is explained. Water quantity and quality are described for a 20 year planning horizon. Ecological processes, environmental resources, social, economic and cultural makeup, values, and trends were briefly mentioned. The applicant could have presenting more detailed maps with land use and infrastructure data on a larger scale. Also, the description of the region was too brief.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Objectives. Weighting factor is 1. 3

The applicant provides a succinct list of objectives that should address the major water-related issues and conflicts within the region. However, they did not provide a discussion as to how the objectives were determined, except that they "are reliant upon existing regional planning documents, and are based upon regional water management needs." The applicant mentions that conflicts arise over restoration projects due to temporary inconveniences and lack of public understanding. Also, they mention that integrating watershed management causes conflict due to divergent statutory obligations and agency culture, but they do not elaborate or provide details on how they plan to overcome these conflicts to achieve the stated objectives.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Water Management Strategies and Integration. Weighting factor is 1. 5

The applicant provides Tables in Attachment 3, Section D which cross-reference the water management strategies with page numbers and citations from the 11 planning documents. They categorized the water management strategies in relation to their objectives. They considered all 20 of the strategies, and only desalination and imported water were irrelevant to their objectives. In Section E, they addressed the integration of these strategies, and cited several examples from their region.

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Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Priorities and Schedule. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The applicant did a good job of identifying both the short-term and long-term regional priorities. However, there was only a brief discussion of how decision making will respond to regional changes, how responses to project implementation will be assessed, and how project sequencing may be altered based upon implementation responses. A more thorough discussion was needed.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Implementation. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The applicant provides the current status of a number of ongoing or planned projects in order of priority. They reference Attachment 8 for the timelines of these projects. The applicant discusses the economic and technical feasibility of the projects, but does not break them down individually. The table includes the current status and references state agencies and the participating agencies as being the institutional structure, but they do not detail out how that structure operates. The applicant does not identify the interdependence between specific projects or identify specific steps to implement the FED.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Impacts and Regional Benefits. Weighting factor is 1.

5

The applicant breaks down the projects and links them with the objectives being addressed and then discusses benefits and potential negative impacts. The benefits have three categories: resource benefits, interregional benefits, and DAC benefits. They also include a discussion of benefits on the regional scale, and show which such benefits can only be accomplished by regional solution. A discussion of the impacts and benefits to other resources is also included.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Technical Analysis and Plan Performance. Weighting factor is 1.

5

The applicant provides a discussion of the current scientific studies and data gathering in their region and provides examples of current methodologies for monitoring water quality, etc. Data gaps are addressed and there is a discussion of monitoring systems and measures to evaluate performance data.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Data Management. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The applicant states that an existing website (www.tiims.org) used to support the Lake Tahoe Basin will be enhanced in scope to support the implementation of the FED. At present, the website does not reference the FED. The website is sophisticated and has good potential to serve all the purposes of this criterion, but the web site enhancements have not yet been completed.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Financing. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The applicant appears to describe a feasible program of financing implementation. They list 18 agencies as beneficiaries of Proposition 50 funds, but the application does not state how much funding each would receive or what each would accomplish with the funds. The financing discussion was addressed, but it was not supported by thorough documentation or sufficient rationale.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Relation to Local Planning & Sustainability. Weighting factor is 1.

3

The applicant states that the lead agency, the Tahoe RCD, coordinates with multiple agencies, but no evidence was found in the application that any of them participated in the development of the FED nor have any of them adopted it. Limited coordination is evidenced by the seven letters in Attachment 2, which only commit the signatures to participate in a Proposition 50 grant and say nothing about the FED. The FED may borrow from the 11 existing local and regional plans or incorporate them by reference, but it does not discuss how the 17 proposed projects relate to the plans established by the local agencies.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Stakeholder Involvement & Coordination. Weighting factor is 1.

2

The applicant appears to have collaborated somewhat with other stakeholders to develop the FED and application. However, public outreach activities specific to integrating the 11 individual plans into an FED to function as an IRWMP are not documented. The applicant lists 33 local, State, and federal agencies in four categories preceded by the statement, "the following group of stakeholders is committed to implementing the Tahoe Sierra Plan" but no formal evidence of this commitment was provided. No documentation was provided to detail how the 33 agencies, said to be committed to implementing the FED, helped develop it, adopted it, or approved it's objectives, strategies, and the 17 proposed projects.

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Question: Funding Match. This evaluation will focus on whether the applicant has demonstrated the ability to meet the minimum funding match or has requested a waiver or reduction in the funding match. Pass or Fail.

Pass

Question: Description of Proposal. Weighting factor is 3.

12

At least one element of the 17 proposed projects is questionable and may not be eligible for Proposition 50 funds (Project 5, the lead abatement and demolition of several buildings in the vicinity of the U.C. Davis Fish Hatchery). A few other examples appear to be eligible, but are not very compelling relative to other water projects in the state. For example, Project 6 is a pipeline replacement and water meter installation for a private water company and Project 7 includes unspecified schoolyard BMP projects to educate the public. Since the budget tables do not itemize the elements of multi-element projects, it is not possible to tally their costs, but they appear to be minor relative to the total requested (<10%). Otherwise, the applicant met the scoring criteria.

Question: Project Prioritization. Weighting factor is 2.

10

The prioritization of projects in the region and within the proposal is discussed. Several high priority projects identified in the FED were included in the proposal. The applicant included 17 projects that were listed within the proposal from highest to lowest priority. They did a very good job of tying the projects back to the objectives in the FED.

Question: Cost Estimate. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The applicant provides budget tables with all the generic line items for each of the 17 proposed projects. However, the information presented is not sufficiently detailed to judge whether the costs are reasonable. While the minimum required information is presented, the applicant needs to provide additional details beyond the minimum required to earn all the possible points.

Question: Schedule. Weighting factor is 1.

2

The applicant provides a schedule which shows sequence and timing of the projects in the proposal. However, it does not show a schedule of related elements of the FED. It is not clear whether the project schedules are reasonable because portions of the milestone charts are unintelligible. Also, the graphical timelines are not clear because the labeling and accompanying key are difficult to understand. The planning horizon is shown until 2012.

Question: Need. Weighting factor is 2.

10

The applicant includes description of current and long-term water management needs. Descriptions of how projects in the proposal will meet those needs are also included. The critical negative impacts from not implementing the projects are discussed. Local and regional environments and economics relative to the projects are also discussed.

Question: Disadvantaged Communities. Weighting factor is 2.

8

The applicant did a good job of making connections to the region's DAC. The applicant identifies the cities of Kings Beach and South Lake Tahoe as DACs, and together they comprise 58% of the population for the region. Most of the benefits to DACs are indirect rather than direct benefits. The applicant is not requesting a funding match reduction.

Question: Program Preferences. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The applicant provided a table with justification for the Program Preferences that showed how well each project met the scoring criteria categories, and most of the projects did a good job of meeting those requirements. However, all of the projects were shown to support and improve local and regional water supply reliability and some of these linkages were questionable such as erosion control and schoolyard BMPs. It would have been beneficial if the applicant would have discussed each project individually.

TOTAL SCORE: 93
